

A

S T A T E of F A C T S,

K Relating to the

REPAIRS done at the Comptroller's House.

20 February,
1753.

THE Committee then ordered the Comptroller's-House to be repaired under Mr. *Dance's* Direction, and according to an Estimate made by him, amounting to 204*l.* 10*s.*

The Bills for all Work done since that Time, at the said House, amount to 1062*l.* 11*s.* 3*d.* which exceeds the said Estimate, by the Sum of 858*l.* 1*s.* 3*d.* and this exceeding is by Mr. *Dance* and the Carpenter, attempted to be thrown entirely upon Mr. *Seaman*. In answer whereto, it may with Truth be said, in Mr. *Seaman's* Defence, that

The Chimney-Piece and Wainscot Door in the Dining Room, Mrs. *Seaman* requested to be done, and Mr. *Dance* most readily undertook they should be done, and drew a Design of the new Chimney-Piece, and Mr. *Seaman* himself gave no particular Orders about it.

The Back Front to the House was done by Mr. *Dance*, upon Consultation between him and Mr. *Seaman*, that it would be a safer and better Repair, than to take away the middle Pier, and it proved to be so, as it was found that the Brick-Work and Timber were decayed.

The small Closet for the Footman's Use, Mr. *Seaman* requested might be alter'd, Mr. *Dance* promised it should, and it was done.

In these several Things Mr. *Seaman* did not interfere, otherwise than as above, or in the way of common Conversation with the Workmen, while they were doing the Work, to the best of his Remembrance (except when the new Front was building) he did say, that Window-Cells of Stone, and a Stone-String, would be much better than to make the Window-Cells of Wood; and it being agreed that the Difference in the Expence could not be material, Mr. *Dance* directed it.

The first Thing that was done was the setting up the Timber-Carcas of the new Stair-Case, which, as first put up, projected so far into the Yard, that it obstructed the Light, therefore Mr. *Seaman* desired it might be altered, which he should not have done, if the Workmen had not first assured him it would not make above 5*l.* Difference, and thereupon the Front only of the Stair-Case was set back, or reduced about 13 Inches.

The next Alteration Mr. *Seaman* believes he interfered in, was the Head-Way on the Cellar-Stairs, which projected so far into the Passage where the old Stairs stood (now converted into a Room for Papers) as rendered the same in a manner useless, but no such Alteration has or can affect the Security of the Building, nor can he think so bad of the Workmen, as to suppose they would have done it; if any Danger to the Building had been apprehended.

Mr. *Seaman* doth not deny, that after the several Repairs before-mentioned were near compleated, he gave Directions for doing of some other Things, such as he apprehended were necessary, either in Point of Health, Security, or Conveniency, and he humbly hopes it may be excused and considered against some other Things, permitted by the Committee, and which had not been done.

Especially as such Directions were chiefly in regard to Alterations in the Pantries, for the sake of Light and Air; and fitting up, with Drawers, the Passage where the old Stair-Case stood, and the Room behind the Sheriff's Court with Presses and Drawers for the City's Deeds and Papers, to preserve them from being destroyed by Rats, which had begun

begun to damage them where they were kept before — But, nevertheless, he would not have desired it, if he imagined the Carpenter would have made it a handle to swell his Bill to such a monstrous Sum.

That nothing was farther from Mr. *Seaman's* Intentions, than extravagant Ornaments, to put the City to unnecessary Expences, neither had he any lucrative Views, nor could he have any manner of Gain, or Advantage to himself other than for his Time, the Accommodation and Conveniency of his Office for Business, and the House for Habitation.

It may be observed by the Carpenter's Bill, lately delivered to the Committee of City-Lands, that from the 8th of *March*, 1753, when the Work began, to *Michaelmas*, 1753, the usual Time of stating the Bills, being Half a Year, and twenty-one Days, in which Time, Mr. *Seaman* had desired no material Alteration (if any) except in Relation to the Head-Way above-mention'd; and before the Back Front was rebuilt, or even begun to be pulled down, the Carpenter's Work only, including the new Stair-Cafe, amounted by the Bills, signed by Mr. *Dance*, the Surveyor, to £263 19 9 $\frac{1}{4}$

Although Mr. *Dance* had before reported to the Committee, that the Sum of 204*l.* 10*s.* was sufficient not only for the Carpenters, but also for the Bricklayers, Plaisterers, and all other Work.

In the next Year, from *Michaelmas*, 1753, to *Michaelmas*, 1754, } he signed the Carpenter's Bills, which came to - - - - - 323 12 7 $\frac{1}{4}$

And again from *Michaelmas*, 1754, to Ditto, 1755, to the Amount of 156 16 3 $\frac{1}{4}$

Total Amount of the Carpenter's Bills - - - - - £744 8 8 $\frac{1}{4}$

If Mr. *Dance*, when he passed the Bills to *Michaelmas*, 1753, had made any the least Remonstrance to Mr. *Seaman*, that the Carpenter's Work, in the first Six Months, had exceeded the whole Estimate, Mr. *Seaman* would not have desired any more Work to be done, without further Application to the Committee, but so far from any Notice then, that during the whole Time the Work was doing, Mr. *Dance* did not hint the least Word of dislike, or make any Objection to what had been done, till after the Committee had thought proper to inspect into the Bills.

Mr. *Seaman* being much surprized, and uneasy at the great Amount of the Bills when collected together, obtained the Committee's Permission to have the Work surveyed, and accordingly he had the same surveyed, by *Thomas Holden*, *Edmund Creak*, and *John Holden*, three experienced skilful Persons, who estimated the whole that had been done at 494*l.* 14*s.* 5*d.* whereof the Carpenter's Work, including Locks, Hinges, Fastnings, and all Ironmonger's Goods, is valued at 309*l.* 3*s.* 11*d.* which is 435*l.* 4*s.* 9*d.* $\frac{1}{4}$ less than the Amount of his Bills; and the said Surveyors alledge, that they allow largely for the said Works, and during the Time of the Survey, Mr. *Seaman* gave Notice twice to Mr. *Dance*, and *Blagrove* the Carpenter, to attend, if they thought fit, but neither of them attended; and as the Surveyors were not able to compleat their Survey and Estimate, by reason of other Business, the same could not be laid before the Committee in Time, for their Report.

The printed Paper, intituled, *An Account of the several Works and Alterations done at the Comptroller's House, since February, 1753*, is answer'd as follows.

The said printed Paper falsely asserts, that the Comptroller gave Orders himself for all the Works therein specified, which Mr. *Seaman* absolutely denies; and it is prov'd to be false in the first *Item*, by the Carpenter's Bill, the new Stair-Cafe being there charg'd at 64*l.* by Contract; which, if so, must have been made by Mr. *Dance*, as Mr. *Seaman* never made any such Contract.

It is also untrue that Mr. *Seaman* gave such Orders, that Work done at his House should be charged to some other Place about the Hall, other than that when the Presses and Drawers, for the City's Papers, were putting up in the Laundry, or Room behind the Sheriffs Court, he might say the same ought to be so express'd and charg'd, and that when the Lord-Mayor's Kitchen, at the End of his Yard, was repairing, that the Work ought to be charg'd done there, as being no Part of his House.

It

It is also false, that Mr. *Seaman* gave Orders for bringing home the Drawers and Shelves in the Month of *August*, or assigned such Reason, or us'd such Expressions in Relation to Courts of Aldermen and Committees, as in the printed Paper is alledged.

It is not true, that there were seldom less than three or four Carpenter's Men at his House, one Week with another, at least not for any Length of Time; there being oftentimes but only one Man, or a Man and a Boy.

The Calculation of the Expence of four Men for three Years together, can be only fictitious, as the Carpenter's Bill begins the 8th of *March*, 1753, and ends the 22d of *September*, 1755, which is but two Years, six Months, and fifteen Days, supposing the Men had been at work that whole Time; whereas it frequently happened there were no Men at work at all.

The Lead on the Top of his House was not taken and turned up, as Mr. *Seaman* believes, to make a Reservoir, as in the Paper is asserted. 'Tis true, there was an Intention to have removed the Cistern from the Yard to the Top of the House, for a Supply of Water in Case of Fire, and a Trial-Pipe was put up from the Pipe in the Yard, and a Hole cut in the Lead to let it through, but it being found that the Water would not rise so high without a Force-Engine; and the Plumber saying, it would come to 30*l*. Mr. *Seaman* dropt all Thoughts of it.

There is not the least Foundation for charging Mr. *Seaman* with giving any such Orders, as by *Christmas* next, would have run the City three or four hundred Pounds more in Debt, as in the aforesaid Paper is untruly alledged.

Neither is it true, that Mr. *Seaman* knew, or necessarily must know, that the Charge of the Work would turn out so very heavy, for although a weekly Account of Work done by the Carpenter, is left at the Comptroller's Office, yet, that being a mixt Account of all Work in general, done within the Week, Mr. *Seaman* could not from thence know the particular Amount of the Work done at any one Place, without extracting and separating the several *Items*, which he never did, as looking upon that to be the proper Business of the Clerk of the Works.

The said printed Paper is drawn up with so little Candour and Truth, that, of the many *Items* it contains, there are but very few wherein some Fact or other is not in the Whole, or in Part, wrong stated, exaggerated, or misrepresented, as will appear upon Inspection and Examination of the Work.

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He should also be ready to
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